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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

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### **Be The Match® Registry Urges New Potential Bone Marrow Donors to Give the Gift of Life**

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health, in conjunction with National Bone Marrow Awareness Month in November, is urging North Dakota to learn more about the need for new potential donors to join the National Marrow Donor Program's Be The Match® Registry.

"Every day, thousands of patients with leukemia and other life-threatening diseases hope for a marrow donor who can make their transplant possible," said Krista Headland, Community Outreach coordinator with the North Dakota Department of Health's Division of Cancer Prevention and Control. "Seventy percent of these patients don't have a matching donor in their family, so they turn to the Be The Match® Registry for someone who can give them a second chance at life."

Although more potential donors are needed from all races and ethnicities, Be The Match® is especially in need of American Indians to join the registry. American Indian patients can have a harder time finding a donor than other patients. Patients are most likely to match someone who shares their heritage. Today, out of a registry of 9.5 million potential donors, only 100,000 are American Indians and Alaska Natives.

Contrary to popular belief, the majority of donations do not involve surgery. Today, the patient's doctor most often requests a peripheral blood stem cell (PBSC) donation, which is nonsurgical. PBSC donors are typically back to their normal routine in one to two days. Many employers, including the State of North Dakota, have provisions that allow an employee to take a short leave of absence for the purpose of donating bone marrow or an organ.

For more information, contact Krista Headland, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.3046.

Visit [www.bethematch.org](http://www.bethematch.org) to learn more about the National Marrow Donor Program's Be The Match® Registry.

– 30 –

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